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# THE YOUNGER QUIRE

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# THE YOUNGER QUIRE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY DAFFYDOWNDILLY

*Untermyer, Louis*



THE MOODS PUBLISHING COMPANY

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# “The Younger Quire”

INTRODUCTION, FOREWORD AND PREFACE.



WHEN the well-known poets Wordsworth and Coleridge published their “*Lyrical Ballads*”, little did they think that they were blessing the unsighted centuries with two immortal poems. But “Tintern Abbey” and “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” have outlived volumes a myriad times more pretentious.

When “*The Germ*” of the Pre-Raphaelites flourished, became a fever and finally died, one deathless contribution outlived all the limp lilies and lank ladies when “The Blessed Damozel” leaned out. Another poetic touchstone from a seemingly insignificant acorn.

When (and now appears the reason for the above sonorous and rhetorical flourish) “*The Younger Choir*” first appeared modest and virgin in its chaste white vellum and ever-so-handsome gilt letters, no more bonfires were lit, no more water-fronts illuminated, no more special bulletins printed than at the inception of the afore-

mentioned works. But that it was full of the rare viands and splendid mead of song not one of its contributors ever doubted. And, though few of them had asked for the gaudy wreath of Fame, there was not one singing brother\* whose head did not seem particularly well shaped to wear the laurels. Inglorious Miltons they were, but not mute.

The purport of this little book (and its wholly serious editor recognizes the folly of a work which has none) is to further proclaim, herald, advertise, entice the reader toward and generally call attention to the larger and more lasting volume. This "Younger Quire" of twenty-four pages cannot by nature of its size and cheapness blazon the beauties of all the boy sopranos, altos and occasional baritones of the "Younger Choir," but contents itself with singling out those poets whose force, power, charm and, most of all, whose individuality is their most arresting feature.

Here, then, for the catholic and unorthodox taste is splendid and various fare. For the intellectual gourmand there are the huge and satisfying mouthfuls of James Oppenheim, the red and gamy portions of George Sylvester Viereck,

---

\*or sister.

the exotic and elusive flavor of Irish stew as prepared by Shaemas O'Sheel, the mysterious entrée of Miss Rice, the hashed metaphors and fine verbs of B. Russell Herts, the (dead) sea fruit of Otto S. Mayer, the domestic Turkish delight of Charles Hanson Towne and the candied sweetmeats and lyric treacle of Louis Untermyer.

If, therefore, the careful and scrupulous reader discovers and does not hesitate to hail even as few as half a dozen imperishable and sempiternal poems, the editor feels that the tremendous labors of the typesetter and proof-reader will not have been in vain.

DAFFYDOWNDILLY.

## Wednesday Afternoon

(After JAMES OPPENHEIM, Author of "SATURDAY NIGHT," "MONDAY MORNING," ETC.)



THE sun spills down on the throng-filled streets great golden-showering glories, Touched with this magic, the buildings loom—enchanted promontories.

Debutantes, manicures, Barnard-girls, ladies' maids jostle each other along Broadway—

Stumbling, unheeding, impetuous, eager, they answer the call of the matinée.

A thousand theatres lure them on; and voices soprano and alto

Blend in a chattering chorus that sings the Rune of the haunting Rialto.

With a stream from the subway and swirls from the cars, in an hour is this marvellous thing made,

While Shakespeare is played by a vaudeville team, and Ibsen succumbs to "*The Spring Maid*."

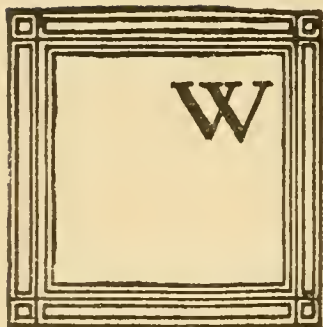
You girl with the five-pound-Huyler's look, I  
see—and a great light dazzles my eyes.  
In you and your thousands of hurrying sisters  
I feel my City of Cities arise.  
Here's Juliet rushing to Romeo—yonder, with  
Rosalinds, Marguerites walk  
And the world and its beauties come rushing  
back, unfurled in this corner of New York.

Oh, young, sweet, pulsing American girls, the  
theatre will hold you and thrill you—  
But what of the vaster vision, the scarce-re-  
vealed dream that shall fill you  
With home-things, broom things, everyday dra-  
mas, rich, vital and splendidly human—  
I see you glorious, hallowed, lifted—a God-  
yeasted spirit—Woman.

A Woman—aye, and more—a Mother, with  
little wild children about your knees—  
Homers, Dantes, Lincolns, Whitmans—you shall  
live to people a world with these.  
Oh, girls—no longer girls—but creatures sky-  
smitten, ten million-starred—  
You are each a warm and throbbing note in the  
eternal symphony of God!

## Inscrutable

(After MURIEL RICE.)



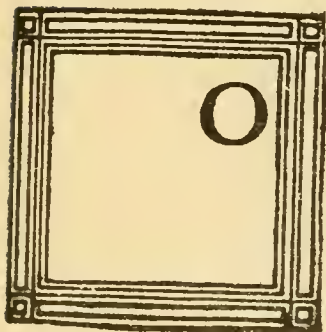
WOULD that I knew why God  
has placed me here—  
My soul is dauntless and I do  
not fear  
The raving ocean, the dis-  
heveled sky,  
The scornful lightnings,  
winds that terrify,  
Nor all the alien stars that  
point and leer.

Ah, who can say what drives the scurrying year,  
Why are the leaves of life so worn and sere,  
Why are the springs of Beauty always dry—  
Would that I knew.

Lo, I am God's melodic mutineer;  
My standard on the heights of Song I rear;  
The awful secrets that are held on high,  
The mystic Wherefore, the enshrouded Why  
And what these verses mean, that seem so clear  
*Would that I knew.*

# In the Garden of Faustina

(After GEORGE SYLVESTER VIERECK.)



H lips of lust, oh lips un-  
blessed,  
I seize thee in a shameful  
kiss  
And drink, altho' I touch the  
Pest,  
Thy sick desire, thy loath-  
some bliss.

Thou hunger of my soul's disease,  
Fever that stabs me through and through,  
Not all the panting, passionate seas  
Could wash away the lure of you.

For thou wert great when Nineveh  
With laughter mad went down to death  
And all men died to worship thee—  
Thou wert the smile of Ashtoreth.

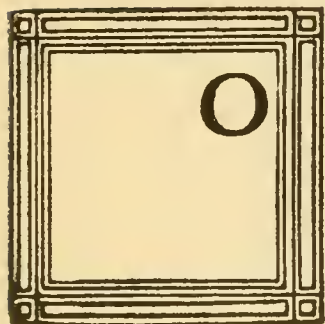
All ages knew thy spell—and yearned . . .  
For thee young kings grew amorous;  
You kindled Hadrian, you burned  
The golden boy Antinous.

You have known all things—blood-red skies,  
Huge, obscene idols on the brinks  
Where vampires meet the harlot's eyes—  
Foul night birds screaming—and a Sphinx!

Oh lips of lust, here shall I feast;  
No evil satisfies or stills me.  
I hail myself Sin's splendid priest—  
I *will* be wicked, tho' it kills me.

# Deidre of the Mysteries

(After SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.)



H little gray feet in the waters  
Oh little gray heavens unfurled;  
'Tis of you that the waters  
and heavens are singing,  
Oh, little gray Rose of the  
World.

Behold, I shall make you a  
song, Oh, my loved one,

A song all of Gaelic, a song all of fires,  
And white things shall be in it, white words and  
white silence—

Vague names, ancient griefs and uncertain  
desires.

Of faeries and runes shall my singing be fashioned—

Of the clashing of swords, of the shadowy  
seas—

We shall call ourselves Eilidh and Oona and  
Oisinn

And Colum and Shaemas and such names as  
these.

Once more shall the palpitant Pig span the  
Heavens,  
Once more shall the musical Spells, which are  
Nine,  
Be lifted and fed by the Passion of Beauty  
And conquer the nations—oh, loved one of  
mine.

*Oh, little gray feet in the waters,  
Oh, little gray heavens unfurled;  
Unravel my message—go seek her and tell her,  
My little gray Rose of the World.*

## Passages from "Fillerup"

(After OTTO S. MAYER.)



THE scene is night, in a grotto, several thousand feet under the Pacific Ocean. The setting suggests murmurs, branch witchery, strangled starlight and such like things. Two water sprites (*Frivol* and *Restless*) are discovered swimming about bearing wreaths of sea-anemones in either hand. They have evidently been singing for several hours.

*Frivol:*

Salt kisses, emeralds, singing spray,  
A cave where moonbeams wanly play—  
Green stars by night, and a rose by day,  
In a swirling, purling sea,  
Where days are all a blaze of blue  
And sunbeams barely filter through,  
Where Dusk is like a velvet dress  
That hides the heaven's shabbiness,  
Where (look up Yeats) the linnet sings  
And morning's full of—various things.

*Restless:*

Verily, verily, that is true—  
One and one are always two  
And (if still you crave for more)  
Two and two are always four.  
So we add each rhyme to rhyme,  
Beating thus trochaïac time,  
Lilting lightly and ere long  
We have sung a splendid Song.

*Frivol (resuming) :*

Sea-weeds, sea-rhythms, pearls and brine,  
Vast coral forests, purple wine  
And mermaid music shall be mine  
    In a churning, burning sea.  
Where waves, aghast with many moons,  
Repeat the season's latest tunes  
And Ocean, hearing each refrain,  
Bellows it, thundering, back again—  
While ancient Night o'er lakes and lawns  
Peers skyward, hour on hour—and yawns.  
*Restless starts to reply as*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

## Lines from "The Gnome and the Nixie"

AN UNDRAMATIC DIALOG.

(*After* B. RUSSELL HERTS.)

"Mr. Herts has contributed, perhaps, the most remarkable line in the whole volume. It goes, if I can spell it correctly:

"Bof—Boof—Boo!"

—Richard Le Gallienne, in a review of  
"*The Younger Choir*."

THE GNOME:

Biff—bang—bing!

These are not poems worth a word.

Why, I have heard

The choiring planets swing

Carolling—

And sing,

Moving the youngest stammering bird

To nobler flights than these.

Such singing would I have until the trees

Shot forth their vernal harmonies

In greater richness. Till the brooks

Answered with clearer laughter

And thenafter

The daws and rooks

Find sweeter tremblings in their throats—

Their melting notes  
Should rise like dawn and startled light  
Out of the deepest night;  
Like stars that shed short silver shreds of  
    sound  
Within the heart of some young poet's lines—  
Not bound  
By crabbéd rules or close confines,  
My Song divines  
The ever-changing but eternal  
Rhythms of Life.  
Life, be it splendid or infernal,  
Life, be it sparkling or irrational—  
I see it all—the humor and the strife  
(*Vide* my columns in "The International").

THE NIXIE:

Silly billy—heigho—  
What is this talk about,  
Why do you walk about,  
    Waving your hands?  
Why do you sputter so,  
Gurgle and mutter so—  
Cannot you utter, so  
    One understands?

THE GNOME:

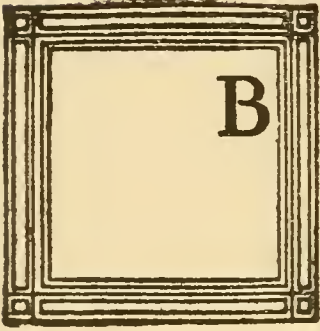
Sis—boom—bah!  
What should you know  
Of po-

Et's craft?  
You, who have laughed,  
Will sow  
The seed  
In bitter Need.  
(A symbol) Lo,  
And, likewise, Ah!  
This thing you mock is not  
The metric rot  
A lot  
Of other bards rehearse.  
No!  
Myself am never fettered. See  
Unhampered, how exultingly  
The soul of me,  
Vibrant and terse,  
Comes forth with glee  
In free  
Verse!

## City Silhouettes

(After CHARLES MANHATTAN TOWNE.)

*New York from an Aeroplane.*



UNDER the stars the city  
sprawls—and dreams,  
Misshapen, vague, it min-  
gles with the night;  
It stretches forth its bridges,  
and it seems  
A shimmering spider spin-  
ning webs of light.

*In front of Vantine's.*

These windows lift me from the streets  
And I am wafted far away  
Where spicy airs, exotic sweets,  
Prolong the day.

Here is the golden, singing sand,  
Here once again I dare rejoice  
With temple-bells, Damascus and  
A lover's voice.

The *sampan* (local color note)  
Is heard beyond the city gates  
Where, smiling in a flowered boat,  
The maiden waits.

Thus, standing by this city wall,  
My spirit spreads a poet's feast  
And I am fed—and drunk with all  
The fabled East.

## Last Love

(*After* LOUIS UNTERMEYER.)



WE went singing without tether  
Thro' the briar and the  
heather,  
My love and I together,  
In the young June days;  
And we faced the world to  
win it,  
For our heart and soul were  
in it,  
And the songs of lark and  
linnet  
All were lyrics in our praise.

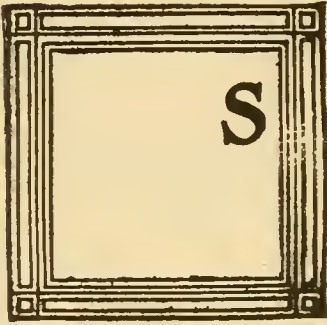
We had pierced Life to the kernel—  
Oh, the hearts of us were vernal,  
And we pledged a faith eternal,  
In the young June days;  
So our happy oaths were plighted,  
And with love and lips united  
Many poems we indited—  
Scribbled many a pretty phrase.

Oh, the whole world seemed to love us,  
And we knew that high above us  
All the gods were jealous of us,  
    In the young June days,  
And our songs were full of pity  
For the lovers in the city,  
Who had never heard a ditty,  
    Wild and witty as our ways.

But oh, the senseless caring,  
For we've done with summer-faring,  
With the dreaming and the daring  
    Of the young June days.  
And the mirth and memories go where  
Visions vanish to a slow air,  
And a wind comes out of nowhere,  
    Like a voice that heals and slays.

## “Ave Atque Vale”

(READ AT A DINNER GIVEN TO B. RUSSELL HERTS  
BY THE CONTRIBUTORS OF “MOODS”  
JANUARY 15TH, 1910.)



O this is the end—our Last  
Supper—  
A feast from the tables of  
Time—  
And, oh, for the pen of a  
Tupper  
To make it immortal in  
rhyme.

But a darkness—a dream of disaster  
Has robbed every jest of its smile—  
We are gathered in grief, for the Master  
Must leave us a while.

We are gathered in grief that is deeper  
Than Night and the hush it bestows,  
Than the dreariest depths of the Dnieper,  
Than a page of De Casseres' prose.  
We are gathered in grief that is greater  
Than Ocean desiring a star,  
Than all of the mournfullest Maeter-  
linck tragedies are.

There is physical food here, and mental,  
But, lacking the salt and the spice,  
We are weary of lily and lentil,  
Of raptures and roses and Rice.  
And this spiritless air that intrudes is  
The reason our feast is a fast,  
For the Master must go—and so “Moods” is  
A thing of the past.

But “Moods” cannot die—Heaven save us—  
Still shines its unfaltering flame—  
Can the pages e’er perish that gave us  
“The Pool” or “The End of the Game”?  
Can the lisplings of Carrie or Hortense  
Be lost to the light of the sun,  
Or the pale, but the powerful, portents  
Of G. Buell Dunn?

Does our drama go wrong, does it trespass  
Or wander afar from the light?  
Our Goodman, the hostage of Thespis,  
Will patiently lead it aright.  
Are we barren of Art? Who can blame us?  
We are stone in an age that is steel,  
And only one spirit can shame us—  
Oh Shaemas O’Sheel.

Does latter day literature never  
Grow greater, but still remain null—  
Does Hunecker dare to be clever  
Or Kennedy dare to be dull?  
Do our masculine tenets grow fewer  
And wear intellectual skirts?  
Let it hurt every other reviewer—  
But B. Russell Herts!

O liltings as limpid as Larcom,  
O rhymes we remembered to read,  
From the masculine message of Markham  
To Kauffman's crepuscular creed—  
From the beauties of ballad and lyric  
Where sin was a sobbing refrain  
To the violet virtues of Viereck,  
Our Poet of Pain.

O dazzling and daring our aims were,  
But we swore an allegiance to all,  
Tho' many and mighty their names were  
And vital and varied their call;  
There was Anarchy (scented with lilac)  
And Freedom (set free by a scribe)  
And Suffrage—not suffrance—(see Shylock)  
Was the badge of our tribe.

But "Moods" having passed, now Endeavor  
Must aim at a worthier end—  
"Be good, let who will then be clever"  
And nothing shall stop you, my friend.  
Be manly of mind and of muscle  
And carry these words as a spell:  
Be buoyant, be brave and, B. Russell,  
Here's wishing you well!









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